

## **Statement on Teaching** *Ludovica Cesareo*

My overall teaching philosophy is to create an engaging and interactive environment where students can actively participate, learn, and thrive. I have translated that into action in the various courses I have taught throughout my career, first as a PhD student in Italy, then as a Post-doctoral fellow at the Wharton School (where I taught both the undergraduate core marketing class and the Advertising Management elective for MBAs), and currently as an Assistant Professor at Lehigh. I've always strived to design modern syllabi, employ innovative teaching techniques, and host notable guest speakers well aligned to the concepts being discussed. I have taught the highest-level students, both undergraduate and graduate, and received excellent student feedback, as highlighted below in their comments and evaluations, as well as won different awards (i.e., Poets&Quants Top 50 Best Undergraduate Business School Professor of 2022; Lehigh University Stabler Award for Excellence in Teaching 2023). I have had the opportunity to teach many courses, from Principles of Marketing to Advertising Management and Integrated Marketing Communications. Beyond those areas, my teaching interests also include Digital Marketing, Marketing Analytics, Luxury Branding, and Consumer Behavior.

At Lehigh, I teach two courses. *Principles of Marketing* (MKT111) (fall 2018 – fall 2022) and *Advertising and Sales Promotion Strategy* (MKT313) (spring 2022 – fall 2022).

In my Principles class, I have students do both individual and group work. For the individual write-up, I have them discuss a brand (e.g., Allbirds, Warby Parker, Peloton,, S'well, iRobot), do a strategic evaluation of the company, its product portfolio, S-T-D-P strategies, and think about valuable marketing research they could do to help the company expand its customer base. For the group work, they are assigned a brand (e.g., Red Bull, HaloTop, Ray-Ban, Crocs, Casper, Rothy's, Kind, Spindrift, Haagen-Dazs, Venmo, Chobani, Spotify, Netflix, National Geographic) and are asked to create a category extension: in the first half of the semester, they focus on coming up with the new product concept, developing it, testing it with the market, and thinking about segmentation and positioning; if the idea is approved by their peers and myself, via a concept test, in the second half of the semester, they focus on the four 4Ps, thinking about distribution strategy and integrated marketing campaigns.

Given the small classroom size, I always try to create a very engaging and personal discussion setting. I get to know my students very well, helping them build upon their strengths while improving upon their weaknesses. I also ask for their feedback on my teaching style mid-way through the semester every year, and incorporate it by making changes to improve their classroom experience. Students feel my high level of commitment to their learning and understanding of the class concepts, and this is reflected in the overall teaching evaluations (e.g., Fall 2019: "The course increased my knowledge of the subject matter": 4.63/5; "Instructor presented content in an organized manner": 4.78/5) and positive comments they write at the end of the courses (e.g., "The Professor was able to keep us engaged with a lively attitude;" "She was extremely passionate about the subject and

always made class interesting and insightful;” “I think Ms. Ludovica was energetic every class, engaging, and helpful. Definitely my favorite professor this semester;” “The teaching style of my instructor helped me a lot throughout the course. I enjoyed how Professor Cesareo set up her lectures with a lot of real world examples that made the concepts we learned more relatable and easier to understand. It was also very evident that she had a lot of knowledge on marketing topics, which helped too. The course was never boring and I always felt engaged in the class.”)

Fall 2020 was a particularly challenging semester as we had to move the classroom experience to be fully virtual via Zoom: I made every effort to re-imagine the lectures so they could be as engaging, active, and interesting as possible even in a computer-mediated world. I used every tool available, from polls to breakout rooms, from videos to Google Jamboards, from spreadsheets to games, in order to keep student engagement and interest high. The students appreciated this effort, as reflected in the overall teaching evaluations (“The course increased my knowledge of the subject matter”: 4.80/5; “Instructor presented content in an organized manner”: 4.75/5) and their positive comments at the end of the semester (e.g., “Keep up the amazing work; best professor I have ever had and the most informative class ever taken on Zoom. You should have Prof. Cesareo teach other faculty how to effectively teach on Zoom;” “This class was very organized and well put together. It was also by far my most interactive class when it came to remote learning. Using all of the features on zoom and engaging the class frequently helped me to feel like it was a somewhat normal learning experience;” “The prof’s teaching style plays a significant role in making the class more enjoyable and engaging. She has multiple activities, in-class exercise, and questions to engage everyone. The overall design of the class (activities, writing assignments, semester group project, and textbook material) makes for a great introductory marketing class.”)

My Advertising class is targeted towards juniors and seniors, mostly marketing majors or minors. These students are highly engaged, motivated, and eager to learn. Not only do I cover the advertising planning process (6Ms) in depth, but we also discuss the advertising industry and its evolution, other tools in the IMC portfolio (e.g., sales promotion and public relations), as well as do a deep dive on digital advertising and social media strategies. Students also complete two group projects. The first is a viral campaign, where they are tasked with creating a post on a topic of my choosing on the BuzzFeed platform and having it go as viral as possible in one week using only earned media strategies. Last semester, two of my students’ group work were picked up by BuzzFeed’s editorial team and reached over 50,000/each in one week! For the second project, they are tasked with creating an advertising campaign for a brand. I always try to work with a real company/non-profit for students’ projects to make their work more tangible and practical. In spring 2022, I partnered with CVPA, the largest non-profit for the environment in PA, to help them create their new campaign ahead of the fall 2022 elections, especially to get new PA residents to vote. In fall 2022, I partnered with Mera Kitchen, a collective in Baltimore, trying to increase foot traffic and customer loyalty to its refugee managed, melting pot cuisine restaurant.

Students were thrilled to work for real companies, to receive feedback on their ideas from them, as well as having a real impact on their advertising efforts. To link class concepts to real-life examples, I host prestigious guest speakers and have them discuss the managerial and operational aspects of running a brand (e.g., the CMO of Nanit, the CEO/CCO Kastner USA) as well as what it means and how should a company build its creative for digital and social media (e.g., Creative Acceleration Lead at Meta). Students seem to be extremely pleased with this class, as evidenced in their end-of-year evaluations: in spring 2022, I received a perfect 5/5 across all items! The comments they wrote also reinforced their positive attitude and satisfaction with the class: “Professor Cesareo made this class very engaging and provided us with relevant examples. She did a great job bringing the class content to life and I really looked forward to coming to this class. I have recommended this course with her to everyone I know!” “This class was a class I enjoyed and was excited for every week and it really was made better by Professor Cesareo's knowledge and extreme intelligence in this field, combined with her teaching style which was fantastic.”

As further evidence of my commitment to excellence in teaching, I have just won two prestigious awards. In December of last year, I was one of Poets&Quants “Top 50 Best Undergraduate Business School Professors” of 2022 (<https://poetsandquantsforundergrads.com/news/2022-best-undergraduate-professors-ludovica-cesareo-lehigh-university-college-of-business/>); I received nominations from many colleagues and students, and it was an incredible honor to win. Last Spring, I won the Lehigh University “Stabler Award for Excellence in Teaching”, which is a student-nominated award, given for mastery of a field, exceptional talent in encouraging students to excellence in their chosen field, as well as excellence as human beings and as leaders of society.

The wealth of teaching experiences I’ve had so far has taught me how to effectively create, structure, and lead a course that students will find motivating and engaging. I have learned to mix a variety of teaching methods and materials, both classic and contemporary. I plan to incorporate these techniques in all my future teaching to address different learning styles of students, and to help them develop a diversified portfolio of skills and knowledge. More generally, I remember what being on the other side, as a student, was like, and which professors and classes inspired me and excited me. I always keep that mind when I am teaching, striving to be enthusiastic and engaging with my students. I think that my passion for teaching and my subject matter is apparent. I look forward to continue bringing this experience, empathy, and passion to all courses I will teach at Lehigh or at any other institution in the future.